

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 15118 251224Z

46

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03

INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02

CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15 STR-04

CEA-01 EUR-12 IO-10 DODE-00 INT-05 ERDA-05 /110 W

----- 066857

R 251013Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8418

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 15118

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, EFIN, LA

SUBJ: NAM NGUM PHASE II

REF: MANILA 10021

1. DURING SOCIAL EVENT EVENING OF JULY 21, THE AMBASSADOR HAD EXTENDED CONVERSATION WITH KASEM CHATIKAWANIT, GENERAL MANAGER, ELECTRIC GENERATING AUTHORITY OF THAILAND. INTER ALIA, SUBJECT PROJECT WAS DISCUSSED. KASEM CONTENTED HE DID NOT CARE IF ELECTRICITY FROM DAM EVER CAME ON LINE. IT WAS NOT NEEDED BY THAILAND. FURTHER, HE EXPRESSED SERIOUS DOUBT, IN VIEW OF THE DEPARTURE OF MANY COMPETENT PEOPLE, THAT THE LAO WOULD BE ABLE TO MANAGE THE PROJECT FROM EITHER A FINANCIAL OR TECHNICAL STANDPOINT.

2. RTG HAS AGREED TO TAKE ALL EXCESS POWER AT THE CURRENT RATE FROM NAM NGUM AND HAS STATED THEY WOULD ENTER INTO NEGOTIATIONS TO INCREASE THAT RATE. HOWEVER, IT IS NOW BECOMING APPARENT THAT THE THAI REGARD NAM NGUM POWER AS AN UNRELIABLE SOURCE.

3. IN VIEW OF KASEM'S RESERVATIONS IT WOULD APPEAR DESIRABLE
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PAGE 02 BANGKO 15118 251224Z

FOR THE ADB TO CLOSELY REAPPRAISE THIS PROJECT. IT LAO

ARE UNABLE TO EFFECTIVELY MANAGE THE PROJECT AND IF THE THAI
ARE NOT INTERESTED IN THIS POWER SOURCE THE RISK OF CANCELLATION,
ALBEIT PAINFUL, MAY BE PREFERABLE TO THE PROBLEMS OF A
FINANCIAL WHITE ELEPHANT LATER ON.

4. STATE 175058 JUST RECEIVED. IF KASEM'S VIEW REFLECT RTG
THINKING, AND WE BELIEVE THEY DO, THERE WOULD BE NO ADVERSE
THAI REACTION SHOULD US WITHDRAW FROM PROJECT. COMPLETELY AGREE
FULL SCALE REVIEW VERY MUCH IN ORDER.
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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To: STATE
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